

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 6, 2018

Office of Information Programs and Services
A/GIS/IPS/RL
U. S. Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20522-8100

Dear Sir/Madam:

Pursuant to Section 3.5 of E.O. 13526, we are writing to formally request a Mandatory Declassification Review of the following report, "West Bank and Gaza: State Monitors Textbook Content but Should Improve Its Reporting to Congress GAO-18-227C: Published: April 26, 2018."

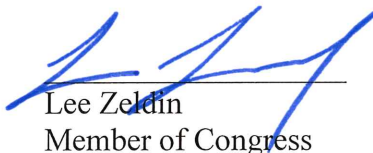
In 2016, Senator James Risch requested that the U.S. General Accountability Office (GAO) perform an investigation of Palestinian Authority textbooks used by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for teaching school children in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. On April 26, 2018, GAO released the report as a classified product.

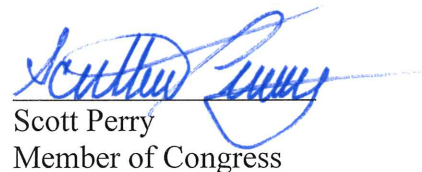
In response, Chuck Young, managing director of public affairs at GAO stated, "The State Department determined the report needed to be classified and cannot be released publicly. GAO is required to follow such classification decisions. GAO must follow such classification decisions so we do not expect to issue a public report at this point. It would be available only to those with the necessary secret security clearance and a need to know, such as Members of Congress." As an independent, nonpartisan agency, GAO has no classification authority nor does the Comptroller General of the United States. The State Department was the originating entity that determined elements of the report contained classified information.

Many of our colleagues in Congress have read the GAO report and believe the information should be declassified and released to the public.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Please contact Sara Matar with Rep. Lee Zeldin at (202) 226-1296 or Laura Detter with Rep. Scott Perry at (202) 225-5826, if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,


Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress


Scott Perry
Member of Congress